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ABSTRACT

This paper presents a course outline, a list of required readings, and procedures for "Narrative, Community, and Communication," an honors class at the University of Southern Mississippi. The paper explains that the course focuses on volunteer community service--the idea being to place the student in a setting of genuine need to help build up the community by helping a person that the student would not normally be around. The paper gives examples of types of community service, instructions to keep a journal of the experiences, an explanation of what is expected for the final paper, a sample of a typical segment of the 7 2-week segments, and a course framework. (CR)

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ED 408 650

Interpersonal Communication, Communication Learning, and Community Service: Course Outline, Readings, and Procedures

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NARRATIVE, COMMUNITY, AND COMMUNICATION Mon 403.01

Professor Richard L. Conville Spring, 1997

Office hours: Tu Th 1:30 - 4:30 Phone: 266-4271 (o)
Wed 8:30 - 11:30 264-2274 (h)
Office: Southern Hall 118

I will be in the office many more hours than this, so feel free to come by. If we fail to make contact, please leave a message with the secretary or a note in my box so we can make an appointment. (conville@ocean.st.usm.edu)

1. We will get ourselves involved in volunteer community service. Examples include, after school tutoring and recreation at Pine Haven or the Boys' and Girls' Club, helping an adult learn to read and write, and voluntering at a soup kitchen. The idea is to place oneself in a setting of genuine need, with people you probably would not be around normally, and contribute what you can to building up the community by helping a person.

2. Keep a journal of your experience. Periodically I will ask you to capture the experience in writing (see no. 7 below).

3. We will devise a way to share these narratives with each other and discuss them.

4. Parallel to this experience-and-writing, we will be doing two kinds of reading, FIRST, looking at models of documentary writing, James Agee's Let Us Now Praise Famous Men and William Carlos Williams' Doctor Stories; and SECOND, examining some recent work by writers in the field of interpersonal communication who propose ways of understanding relationships and the interpersonal communication that constitutes them.

5. The readings for a particular time period are to be incorporated into the writing we do at that time.

6. At midterm, I will want you to practice writing a short version your final paper (albeit, for a grade). Your object will be to integrate the four strands of the course, the service learning experience, the theoretical perspectives on interpersonal communication we will have read, the models of documentary writing we will have read, and your periodic writing you will have done along the way.
(max 5* pp, dbl sp, APA, etc) *subject to change

6.a. "the service learning experience" includes your personal, subjective responses to what you see and do. To the extent that the service learning experience touches your inner life, this is your chance to dialogue with yourself (and perhaps with me and with the class) about those concerns, dilemmas, perplexities, frustrations, etc.

7. For the final, I will want you to produce a lengthy narrative of your community service experience in which you demonstrate your ability to incorporate the four (4) strands of the course enumerated in no. six; AND MORE, (5) enunciate your insights into the relationship your have been focusing on in the service learning project and (6) spell out your insights in the service learning experience itself. (12• pp max etc.) •subject to change

8. The course will divided into 7 two week segments. The first and the last will be for introducing and concluding the course. A typical segment within the middle 5 segments will look like this:

A	B	C	D ••
Monday	Wednesday	Monday	Wednesday
introduce the theory piece & the model piece	discuss & elaborate same; §§	meet at Beagle Bagel Back Room for scintillating conversation re: S-L exper & A & B	Writing assm due; read some aloud; 5 to share

•• five of these, 2 pp. max. all combined into one grade worth 20 % of the course; midterm paper • 30 %; final paper • 50 %.

§§ I will make some seminar assignments at these points.

9. I will reserve the right to schedule tutorial sessions after midterm to examine you on your grounding, in preparation for the final paper.

10. "One way of making education more holistic is to get outside the classroom and off the campus. It interrupts the programming twelve years of classroom conditioning automatically call up; the change in environment changes everything. The class becomes a social unit; students become more fully rounded human beings--not just people who either know the answer or don't know it. Inside the classroom, it's one kind of student that dominates; outside, it's another. Qualities besides critical thinking can come to light: generosity, steadfastness, determination, practical competence, humor, ingenuity, imagination. Tying course content to the world outside offers a real-world site for asking theoretical questions; it answers students' need to feel that their education is good for something other than a grade point average. . . ." [Jane Tompkins, Chronical of Higher Education, 12/6/96, p. B 11; via Maureen Ryan, thanks]

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COURSE FRAMEWORK

Introduction, Jan 13,15, 22

THEORY	MODEL	S-L DISC	WRITING
Jan 27 Theory	Jan 29 Doc St	Feb 3 Beagle Bagel Cafe	Feb 5
Feb 10 Theory	Feb 12 Agee	Feb 17 BBC	Feb 19
Feb 24 Theory	Feb 26 Doc St	Mar 3 BBC	Mar 5
Mar 10 - 14 Spring Holidays			
Mar 17 Theory	Mar 19 Agee	Mar 24 BBC	Mar 26
Mar 31 Theory	Apr 2 Doc St	Apr 7 BBC	Apr 9
Apr 14 Theory	Apr 16 Agee	Apr 21 BBC	Apr 23

Conclusion, April 28, 30 & May 5, 7

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THEORY READINGS

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Millar, F. E. & Rogers, E. (1987). Relational dimensions of interpersonal dynamics. In M. E. Roloff & G. R. Miller (Eds.), Interpersonal Processes: New Directions in Communication Research. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Strine, M. S. (1992). Understanding 'how things work': Sexual harassment and academic culture. Journal of Applied Communication Research, 20, 391-400.

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